



Legislative Bulletin.....March 26, 2003

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**H.Res. 113 — Recognizing the social problem of child abuse and neglect,
and supporting efforts to enhance public awareness of the problem
(Hayworth)**

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled for consideration on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Res. 113 includes several findings regarding child abuse, including statistics that approximately 3 million reports of suspected or known child abuse involving 5 million children are made each year and 1,200 children lose their lives as a direct result of abuse and neglect annually.

The resolution goes on to express the sense of the House that:

- “all Americans should keep the victims of child abuse and neglect in their thoughts and prayers” and “seek to break the cycle of child abuse and neglect”; and
- “the faith community, nonprofit organizations, and volunteers across the United States should recommit themselves and mobilize their resources to assist these abused and neglected children.”

The resolution further expresses the support of the House for the “goals and ideals of the ‘Day of Hope,’ which was initiated by Childhelp USA” and “commends Childhelp USA for all of its efforts on behalf of abused and neglected children throughout the United States.”

Additional Background: The child abuse organization Childhelp USA has established the first Wednesday in April (Child Abuse Prevention Month) as the “National Day of Hope.”

Government Funding: In fiscal year 2001, Childhelp USA received \$8,366,555 in government grants, 30% of its total revenue (Source: GuideStar, <http://www.guidestar.org/>).

Committee Action: The resolution was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Staff Contact: Lisa Bos, lisa.bos@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-1630

H.Res. 57—Recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of “National Runaway Prevention Month” (*Israel*)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Res. 57 would resolve that “the House of Representatives recognizes and supports the goals and ideals of ‘National Runaway Prevention Month.’”

Additional Background: The National Network for Youth and National Runaway Switchboard are co-sponsoring National Runaway Prevention Month during the month of November to “increase public awareness of the life circumstances of youth in high-risk situations and the need for safe, healthy, and productive alternatives, resources, and supports for youth, families, and communities.” Visit this website for more details:
<http://www.nrscrisisline.org/whatsnrpm.asp>

Government Funding: In fiscal year 2001, the National Network for Youth received \$272,204 in government grants, 22% of its total revenue. In fiscal year 2002, the National Runaway Switchboard received \$993,271 in government funds, 95% of its total revenue (Source: GuideStar, <http://www.guidestar.org/>).

According to the resolution, one out of every seven Americans run away from home before reaching the age of 18.

Committee Action: On February 5, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution would authorize no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.Con.Res. 44—To express support for the celebration in 2004 of the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion of 1854 (Leach)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 44 would resolve that Congress:

- “expresses its support for the work of all the Federal, State, and local entities, and the work of all interested groups that are preparing sesquicentennial activities to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion of 1854;
- “expresses its support for the events to be held in observance of the Grand Excursion of 1854 in Chicago, Rock Island, Moline, and Galena, Illinois, in Davenport, Clinton, and Dubuque, Iowa, in Prairie du Chien and La Crosse, Wisconsin, in Wabasha, Winona, Red Wing, Saint Paul, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, and in many other communities during the sesquicentennial observance; and
- “calls on the President of the United States, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, the Director of the National Park Service, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, other public officials, and the citizens of the United States to support, promote, and participate in the many sesquicentennial activities being planned to commemorate the Grand Excursion of 1854.”

Additional Background: In 1854, the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad became the first railroad to reach the Mississippi River from the East Coast, and that achievement was celebrated with a combined railroad and riverboat trip known as the “Grand Excursion of 1854.” The excursion party traveled from Chicago, Illinois, to Rock Island, Illinois, by train and then proceeded by boat from Rock Island to the present-day twin cities of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and St. Paul, Minnesota.

According to the resolution, communities located on the 419 mile stretch between Rock Island and Minneapolis are investing more than \$5 billion in recreational, commercial, and environmental improvements to prepare for the celebration of the Grand Excursion in 2004. Local, regional, national, and international marketing programs and initiatives will encourage hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region to celebrate the Excursion. The National Park Service, along with other federal, state, and local agencies and many other interested groups, are preparing activities to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Grand Excursion.

Visit this website for more details: <http://www.grandexcursion.com>

Committee Action: On February 13, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution would authorize no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.R. 825—To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7401 West 100th Place in Bridgeview, Illinois, as the “Michael J. Healy Post Office Building” (*Lipinski*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 825 would rename the Moraine Valley Post Office in Bridgeview, Illinois, as the “Michael J. Healy Post Office Building.”

Additional Background: On June 21, 1981, while guarding the Chicago Main Post Office, Postal Police Officer Michael J. Healy, 26, was murdered by three assailants in a foiled robbery attempt. Mr. Healy was the first officer of the Postal Inspection Service to be killed in the line of duty.

Committee Action: On February 13, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The only costs associated with a post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Constitutional Authority: Though no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to “establish Post Offices and post Roads.”

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.R. 917—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1830 South Lake Drive in Lexington, South Carolina, as the “Floyd Spence Post Office Building” (*Wilson of South Carolina*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 917 would designate the Post Office located at 1830 South Lake Drive in Lexington, South Carolina, as the “Floyd Spence Post Office Building.”

Additional Background: Floyd Spence was a U.S. Representative from South Carolina from 1971 to 2001. Mr. Spence died on August 16, 2001. For tributes and statements on the death of Floyd Spence, visit this website:

http://www.capitolsource.net/spence_tributes_statements.html

Committee Action: On February 25, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The only costs associated with a post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Constitutional Authority: Though no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to “establish Post Offices and post Roads.”

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.R. 981—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 141 Erie Street in Linesville, Pennsylvania, as the “James R. Merry Post Office” (English)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 981 would designate the Post Office located at 141 Erie Street in Linesville, Pennsylvania, as the “James R. Merry Post Office.”

Additional Background: James R. Merry was a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 1980 to 1996. Mr. Merry died on February 1, 2001.

Committee Action: On February 27, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The only costs associated with a post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

Constitutional Authority: Though no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to “establish Post Offices and post Roads.”

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.Res. 153—Recognizing the public need for fasting and prayer in order to secure the blessings and protection of Providence for the people of the United States and our Armed Forces during the conflict in Iraq and under the threat of terrorism at home (Akin)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.Res. 153 would resolve that the President should issue a proclamation:

- “designating a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States; and
- “calling on all people of the United States--
 - to observe the day as a time of prayer and fasting;
 - to seek guidance from God to achieve a greater understanding of our own failings and to learn how we can do better in our everyday activities; and
 - to gain resolve in meeting the challenges that confront our Nation.”

Additional Background: The rest of the resolution is as follows:

Whereas the United States is currently engaged in a war on terrorism in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001;

Whereas the Armed Forces of the United States are currently engaged in a campaign to disarm the regime of Saddam Hussein and liberate the people of Iraq;

Whereas, on June 1, 1774, the Virginia House of Burgesses called for a day of fasting and prayer as an expression of solidarity with the people of Boston who were under siege by the enemy;

Whereas, on March 16, 1776, the Continental Congress, recognizing that the “Liberties of America are imminently endangered” and the need “to acknowledge the overruling Providence of God,” called for a day of “Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer;”

Whereas, on June 28, 1787, during the debate of the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin, convinced of God's intimate involvement in human affairs, implored the Congress to seek the assistance of Heaven in all its dealings;

Whereas, on March 30, 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, at the bequest of the Senate, and himself recognizing the need of the Nation to humble itself before God in repentance for its national sins, proclaimed a day of fasting, prayer and humiliation;

Whereas all of the various faiths of the people of the United States have recognized, in our religious traditions, the need for fasting and humble supplication before Providence;

Whereas humility, fasting, and prayer in times of danger have long been rooted in our essential national convictions and have been a means of producing unity and solidarity among all the diverse people of this Nation as well as procuring the enduring grace and benevolence of God;

Whereas, through prayer, fasting, and self-reflection, we may better recognize our own faults and shortcomings and submit to the wisdom and love of God in order that we may have guidance and strength in those daily actions and decisions we must take; and

Whereas dangers and threats to our Nation persist and, in this time of peril, it is appropriate that the people of the United States, leaders and citizens alike, seek guidance, strength, and resolve through prayer and fasting

Committee Action: On March 20, 2003, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Government Reform but was not considered.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution would authorize no expenditure.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: No.

RSC Staff Contact: Paul Teller, paul.teller@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9718

H.R. 14 — Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (Hoekstra)

Order of Business: The bill will be considered on Wednesday, March 26th, pursuant to a unanimous consent agreement allowing for two hours of general debate.

Summary: H.R. 14 reauthorizes the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Adoption Opportunities program, the Abandoned Infants Assistance Act, and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

CAPTA was established in 1974 to create a focal point within the federal government to identify and address the issues of child abuse and neglect and to support effective methods of prevention and treatment. CAPTA was last reauthorized in 1996 and expired at the end of fiscal year 2001.

H.R. 14 makes a variety of changes to CAPTA:

- **Increases the authorization levels for CAPTA programs to \$200 million and such sums (FY 03 appropriations = \$81.7 million);**
- Allows states to use funds for partnerships between child protective services and private and community-based organizations;
- Promotes increased collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system, public agencies and community-based organizations;
- Requires states to develop a plan to address the needs of infants harmed by prenatal alcohol or drug exposure;

- Requires the Secretary of HHS to perform the fourth National Incidence Study, which collects data on children who have been the subject of investigation by child protection agencies and those suspected of being abused;
- Adds language promoting the use of funds to improve the recruitment, training, and retention of child protective services personnel;
- Requires child protective services personnel to inform individuals being investigated for abuse of the allegations or complaints made against them, without compromising the identity of the individual making the allegation;
- Adds language promoting increased public education on the role of the child protection system and the reporting of suspected incidents of child abuse;
- Places greater emphasis on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

H.R. 14 reauthorizes the Adoption Opportunities program, which authorizes grants to states and local public and nonprofit agencies for such things as promoting quality standards for adoption services, providing adoption counseling and increasing the placement of foster care children with adoptive families. The bill makes some minor technical changes to the program and requires the Secretary of HHS to conduct a study on the dynamics of successful adoptions. **The Adoption Opportunities program is authorized in the bill at \$40 million and such sums (FY 03 appropriations = \$27.4 million).**

H.R. 14 also reauthorizes the Abandoned Infants Assistance Act, which authorizes grants to public and private nonprofit agencies for activities such as preventing the abandonment of infants, providing residential care for infants and young children, recruiting and training foster families for abandoned infants, and recruiting and training health and social services personnel to work with abandoned children. The bill makes minor changes to the Act and requires the Secretary of HHS to conduct a study on the annual number of infants and young children who are victims of homicide, characteristics of parents who have abandoned an infant, and an estimate of the annual cost of providing for the care of abandoned infants to federal, state and local governments. **H.R. 14 authorizes \$45 million and such sums for the Act (FY 03 appropriations = \$12.2 million).**

Additional Background: The House passed two bills similar to H.R. 14 in the 107th Congress. H.R. 3839 passed the House on April 23, 2002, by a vote of 411-5. H.R. 5601 passed the House by voice vote on October 15, 2002. The Senate did not pass a bill.

Committee Action: H.R. 14 was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce and reported favorably by voice vote on February 13, 2003.

Cost to Taxpayers: The bill would authorize total appropriations of **\$312 million in FY03**. CBO estimates that total authorizations under H.R. 14 would total **\$2.2 billion from 2003-2007**.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: The bill does not create new federal programs but does create new federal rules within current programs as detailed above.

Constitutional Authority: The Education and the Workforce Committee, in House Report 108-26, cites Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, “The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.”

Staff Contact: Lisa Bos, lisa.bos@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-1630